

# ***Procedures for Participation of Students with Disabilities in Virginia's Accountability System***

*Including Test Accommodations  
and Participation Criteria*

**A Guide for Educators and Parents**

**Commonwealth of Virginia  
Department of Education  
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# **Virginia Department of Education**

## **Procedures for Participation of Students with Disabilities in Virginia's Accountability System**

This document provides information about the participation of students with disabilities in the assessment component of Virginia's Accountability System. Students with disabilities may participate through the general Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment, the Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA), the Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program (VSEP), or the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP).

Included in this document are guidelines for determining how students with disabilities participate in the Virginia Assessment Program, procedures for providing testing accommodations, and documentation requirements.

### **I. Definition of a Student with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia include identified students under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004* [IDEA '04] P. L. 108-446 and under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* (1973), as amended.

### **II. Who Should Be Tested**

It is the intent of the Commonwealth of Virginia to include *all* students with disabilities in the assessment component of Virginia's accountability system. The federal regulations under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* and state regulations under the Virginians with Disabilities Act, Section 51.5-40 *et seq.* of the Code of Virginia, require that individuals with disabilities be given equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the policies and procedures customarily granted to all individuals. More specifically, IDEA 2004 regulations require that all students with disabilities participate in the state's accountability system.

Additionally, the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, P.L. 107-110, requires that students with disabilities participate in assessments that measure adequate yearly progress of schools, school divisions, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. *No Child Left Behind* requires annual assessments in reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 8 and once at the high school level.

### **III. Determination of How Students with Disabilities Participate in Virginia's Accountability System**

All students with disabilities in grades 3 through 8, as well as those enrolled in courses that have an end-of-course SOL test, those who are pursuing a Modified Standard diploma, and those participating in the VAAP, will participate in Virginia's Accountability System. Only the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team or 504 Committee may determine non-participation in the assessment for grades 3 through 8 in the areas of writing, history, and science. (See Section VIII – Non-Participation of Students with Disabilities in a Standards of Learning Assessment(s).) Students with disabilities will participate in the general SOL Assessment either with or without accommodations or in the VGLA or VSEP. If a student is working towards educational goals other than those prescribed for a Modified Standard, Standard, or Advanced Studies Diploma, then he/she should be considered for participation in the VAAP. Decisions about participation and how a student with a disability will be tested should be made independently for each content area.

- For all students with disabilities identified under IDEA 2004, the IEP Team determines how the student will participate in the accountability system. For students identified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the 504 Committee determines how the student will participate.

When determining participation in Virginia's Accountability System, all students with disabilities first must be considered for participation in the general SOL assessments. A student's IEP or 504 Plan must specify the student's participation in the state accountability system as follows:

- participation in the general SOL test with no accommodations;
- participation in the general SOL test with accommodations;
- participation in the VGLA, VSEP, or VAAP; or
- non-participation in an assessment (except in reading, mathematics, and all end-of-course assessments) with an explanation of why the student is not participating, statement of the ramifications of the decision not to participate, and a description of how the student will be assessed in this area. (See Section VIII – Non-Participation of Students with Disabilities in a Standards of Learning Assessment(s).)

### **IV. Role of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team**

*(For students identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act)*

For all students with disabilities identified under IDEA 2004, the IEP is the plan to ensure that they receive an appropriate education. The IEP process also ensures that each student's

parent(s)<sup>1</sup> or surrogate parent(s) is an active participant of the IEP Team. The IEP Team makes decisions about participation in each of the assessments and the need for and selection of accommodations. These decisions should be made during the IEP Team meeting that precedes the SOL assessment administration. If the decisions about participation in Virginia's accountability system are not reflected on the current IEP, an IEP meeting must be held to address and document these issues on the IEP prior to the test administration. The ramifications of these decisions made by the IEP Team must be clearly explained to and understood by the student's parent(s) and the student, if appropriate. Additionally, the parent(s) and student should be provided with an explanation of their procedural safeguards and due process rights.

## **V. Role of the 504 Committee**

*(For students identified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and do not have an IEP)*

Each school division is required to determine appropriate educational programs for all students with disabilities who qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, by convening a knowledgeable group to evaluate and determine program needs. Therefore, decisions about the participation in each of the SOL assessments, the need for and selection of accommodations, or the non-participation in an SOL assessment are the responsibility of a 504 Committee. Each student's parent, legal guardian or surrogate parent must be a participant in these decisions. These decisions should be made during the 504 Committee meeting which precedes the SOL assessment administration. If the decisions were not made, an additional 504 Committee meeting must be held to address these issues prior to the test administration. The ramifications of the decision must be clearly explained to and understood by the student's parent, legal guardian, or surrogate parent and the student, if appropriate.

## **VI. Procedures for Determining Participation**

When determining how the student will be tested on a state assessment, the IEP Team or 504 Committee should consider the following options:

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<sup>1</sup> See the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia for the definition of parent for a child with a disability. The parental rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of majority (18 in Virginia) unless certain procedures specified in regulations have been followed.

Characteristics of Student Performance	Recommended Participation for Standards of Learning Test
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#### OPTION 1

<p><b><i>If the student is</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) able to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a multiple choice test, either with or without accommodations;</li> </ul> <p><b><i>and</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) is working on Standards of Learning at grade level</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Then</i></b></p> <p>the student should take the general Standards of Learning test, either with or without accommodations.</p>
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Characteristics of Student Performance	Recommended Participation for Virginia Grade Level Alternative
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#### OPTION 2

<p><b><i>If the student is</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) enrolled in grades 3 through 8,</li> </ul> <p><b><i>and</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) has an IEP/504 Plan (or one is being developed),</li> </ul> <p><b><i>and</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) as a result of a disability, is unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a multiple-choice test, even with accommodations,</li> </ul> <p><b><i>and</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) is working on Standards of Learning that are at grade level,</li> </ul> <p><b><i>and</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) can demonstrate individual achievement of Standards of Learning content through means other than multiple-choice formats,</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Then</i></b></p> <p>the student should participate in the Virginia Grade Level Alternative.</p>
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Characteristics of Student Performance	Recommended Participation for Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program
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### OPTION 3

<p><b><i>If the student has</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an IEP/504 Plan (or one is being developed) and is enrolled in a course with a Standards of Learning end-of-course test, <b><i>or</i></b></li> <li>b) is pursuing a Modified Standard Diploma and seeking certification for having met literacy and/or numeracy requirements <b><i>and</i></b></li> <li>c) as a result of a disability, is unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a multiple-choice test, even with accommodations,</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Then</i></b></p> <p>the student should participate in the Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program.</p>
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Characteristics of Student Performance	Recommended Participation for Virginia Alternate Assessment Program
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### OPTION 4

<p><b><i>If the student has</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an IEP (or one is being developed), <b><i>and</i></b></li> <li>b) demonstrates significant cognitive disabilities, <b><i>and</i></b></li> <li>c) requires intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in a variety of settings to show interaction and achievement, <b><i>and</i></b></li> <li>d) is working toward educational goals other than those prescribed for a Modified Standard, Standard, or Advanced Studies Diploma</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Then</i></b></p> <p>the student should participate in the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program.</p>
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## **Description of Assessment Program**

### **A. Standards of Learning Program**

The Standards of Learning (SOL) in the areas of English, mathematics, science, history and social science are intended to “set reasonable targets and expectations for what teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to learn.” The purposes of the SOL assessments at grades 3 through 8 and high school are to inform parents and teachers about what students are learning in relation to the SOL and to hold schools accountable for teaching the SOL content.

### **B. Virginia Grade Level Alternative Assessment**

The purpose of the Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA) is to provide students whose nature and level of disability prevents them from accessing the SOL test(s) in a content area, even with accommodations, with the opportunity to participate in state assessments. The VGLA is available for students in grades 3 through 8 as a grade level alternative assessment for general SOL testing. Only students with an identified disability eligible under IDEA 2004 or Section 504 who have an IEP or 504 Plan, and meet the VGLA guidelines for participation may be assessed through the VGLA. Students who qualify to participate in the VGLA will be required to demonstrate individual achievement of grade level content as presented in the SOL test blueprints. Students will compile a collection of work samples, called a Collection of Evidence (COE), to demonstrate performance on all on-grade level SOL according to which they have received instruction. Decisions about participation are made on a test-by-test and individual basis.

### **C. Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program**

The purpose of the Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program (VSEP) is to provide students whose nature and level of disability prevents them from accessing the SOL test(s) in a content area, even with accommodations, with the opportunity to participate in state assessments. The VSEP is available for students as a grade level alternative assessment for SOL end-of-course tests and/or certification for literacy and/or numeracy for the Modified Standard Diploma. Students who qualify to participate in the VSEP will be required to demonstrate individual achievement in course content standards as presented in the SOL test blueprints for the academic content areas in which they are being assessed. Only students with an identified disability eligible under IDEA or Section 504; have an IEP or 504 Plan; and who meet the VSEP guidelines for participation may be assessed through the VSEP. Students will compile a collection of work samples, called a Course Work Compilation (CWC), to demonstrate performance on any and all SOL in which they have received instruction. Decisions about participation are made on a test-by-test and individual basis.



## **D. Virginia Alternate Assessment Program**

The purpose of the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) is to evaluate the performance of students with significant cognitive disabilities. The VAAP is available to students in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 for students working on academic standards that have been reduced in complexity and depth. Only students with significant cognitive disabilities who are eligible under IDEA 2004 and who meet the VAAP guidelines for participation may be assessed through the VAAP. Students participating in the VAAP may fulfill federal participation requirements by submitting collections of evidence for the content areas of only mathematics and reading; however, the Virginia Department of Education strongly recommends submission of evidence in all content areas being assessed by the SOL tests for general education students at the same grade level.

## **VII. Selection of Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The IEP Team or 504 Committee has the responsibility for decisions regarding the need for and selection of accommodations for students with disabilities. Accommodations allow students with disabilities equal access in demonstrating their achievement. Typically, accommodations can be classified in the following categories:

- timing/scheduling
- setting
- presentation
- response

Accommodations considered for testing should be those the student uses during classroom instruction and assessments as identified in the student's IEP or 504 Plan. Accommodations should not be used only for participating in an SOL assessment(s). The student should be familiar with an accommodation because the use of an unfamiliar accommodation during testing may have a negative impact on the student's performance. However, it is important to note that certain accommodations used for instruction or classroom assessment may not be allowable on the statewide assessment. Finally, an accommodation based solely on its potential to enhance performance beyond providing equal access is inappropriate.

Examples of allowable accommodations are listed on the following pages.

## **CLASSIFICATIONS OF ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **TIMING/SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS**

- time of day
- breaks during test
- multiple test sessions \*
- order of tests administration

### **SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

- preferential seating (e.g., at the front of the room or in a study carrel)
- small group testing
- individual testing (one-on-one)
- special lighting
- adaptive or special furniture
- test administered in locations with minimal distractions
- noise buffers
- hospital/home/non-school setting

### **PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS**

- Braille \*
- large print \*
- Plain English version
- enlarging the answer document
- reading directions to students
- simplifying directions
- interpreting/transliterating directions (e.g., sign language, cued speech) \*
- written directions to accompany oral directions
- clarifying directions
- reading of test items aloud \*
- audio-tape version of test items \*
- interpreting/transliterating (e.g., sign language, cued speech) test items (except for reading tests) \*
- magnifying glass
- amplification equipment (e.g., hearing aid or auditory trainer)
- templates
- masks or markers to maintain place

**NOTE:** Follow special procedures as outlined in the Appendix for each of the accommodations marked with an asterisk (\*).

## **RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS**

- student marks test booklet and Examiner/Proctor transfers responses to answer document \*
- student responds verbally, points, or indicates an answer and Examiner/Proctor marks answer document \*
- abacus
- arithmetic tables (only if test allows a calculator)
- braille \*
- large diameter/ special grip pencil
- pencil grip
- word processor \*
- typewriter \*
- augmentative communication device \*
- spell check (including spell checkers)
- spelling dictionary
- tape recorder (only for pre-writing activity to tape response for the direct writing component of the English test)
- dictation to a scribe (direct writing component of the English test only) \*
- use of a calculator on grade 3 mathematics test and on the computation section of the grades 4, 5, 6, and 7 mathematics tests (calculators are not routinely supplied to all students)
- use of arithmetic tables on grade 3 mathematics test and on the computation section of the grades 4, 5, 6, and 7 mathematics tests (an arithmetic table is considered comparable to a calculator and calculators are not routinely supplied to all students)
- use of a calculator with additional functions to those routinely supplied to all students
- use of word prediction software (direct writing component of the English test only)\*

**NOTE:** Follow special procedures as outlined in the Appendix for each of the accommodations marked with an asterisk (\*).

Questions about any accommodations not listed above should be directed to the Division Director of Testing who will consult with Department of Education staff as needed. Accommodations that violate test security are not permitted.

## **VIII. Non-Participation of Students with Disabilities in a Standards of Learning Assessment(s)**

### **A. Non-Participation of Students with Disabilities in Grades 3 through 8**

Only the student's IEP Team or 504 Committee may determine non-participation in the assessments for grades 3 through 8 in the areas of science, history/social science, and writing.

Non-participation in an SOL assessment in grades 3 through 8 should be considered only for students who have not received instruction in content covered by the SOL assessment in science, history/social science, and writing.

If the IEP Team or 504 Committee determines that it is not appropriate for the student to participate in an SOL assessment in science, history/social science, or writing the consequences of this decision must be fully explained so that the student's parent, legal guardian, or surrogate parent and the student, if appropriate, understand the consequences. In grades 3 through 8 consequences may include:

- teachers, parents and the student will not receive the information on student progress contained in the SOL assessment score reports; and
- the student may not have the opportunity to experience an SOL assessment in the content area prior to taking the assessments needed for graduation.

The following non-participation procedures and practices must be followed by the IEP Team or the 504 Committee:

1. The IEP Team or 504 Committee shall review the IEP/504 Plan of each student with respect to participation in each of the SOL assessments.
2. The IEP Team or 504 Committee must document its determination that a student will not participate in a particular SOL assessment. If the IEP Team or 504 Committee determines that the child must take an alternate assessment instead of a regular SOL assessment, the documentation shall include a statement of (A) why the student cannot participate in the SOL assessment and (B) why the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the student.

The following are not acceptable reasons for why a particular assessment is inappropriate:

- the student's disability;
- the belief that the student may fail the test;
- the belief that the student does not need this assessment to be promoted to the next grade or to graduate with an advanced studies diploma, a standard diploma, a modified standard diploma, a special diploma, or a certificate;
- the student is reading or is performing below grade level;
- the belief that the experience will be too stressful for the student;
- the student's behavior prohibits taking the test with a group; and
- the student has not mastered all of the curricula that are covered on grades 3 through 8 SOL assessments.

This documentation must be attached to or become part of the student's IEP or 504 Plan. It must indicate that the consequences of this decision have been fully explained to and

understood by the student's parent, legal guardian or surrogate parent, or student, if appropriate, and that the parent's and student's procedural safeguards and due process rights have been explained.

3. a. **Students with a 504 Plan** must participate in the SOL assessments in at least reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 8.
- b. **Students with an IEP** must participate in the SOL assessments in at least reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 8 or in the VAAP. If the IEP Team determines that a student will not participate in any of the SOL assessments, then the IEP Team needs to determine if the student meets the criteria to participate in the VAAP. If the student does not meet the criteria, then the student will participate in the SOL reading and mathematics tests or the VGLA reading and mathematics tests.

If the parent, guardian, surrogate parent, or student requests non-participation in a particular SOL assessment, an IEP Team or 504 Committee will be convened to consider the request. The IEP Team or 504 Committee must document in the student's IEP or 504 Plan its deliberations and its decision relative to this request.

Decisions of non-participation by a parent, guardian, surrogate parent, or student will be considered a refusal to participate.

## **B. Non-Participation of Students with Disabilities in End-of-Course Testing**

Students with disabilities must take all applicable end-of-course SOL assessments if the student is enrolled in the course. Students who are auditing a course or being instructed in only part of the content and thus not enrolled do not take the SOL end-of-course assessment. In such cases, the course title and code should reflect the instruction being provided the student.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Procedures to Follow in Providing Students with Certain Accommodations on the Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments**

The information outlined below provides specific procedures for providing students with disabilities certain accommodations on the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments. The use of accommodations are determined by the student's IEP Team or 504 Committee and must be duly indicated on the IEP or 504 Plan.

#### **TIMING/SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATION**

##### **Multiple Test Sessions**

The SOL tests are not timed. However, some students may be unable to concentrate for a long period of time or may have short attention spans. For such students, it may be advisable to divide up the test into segments, which students can accomplish and check over in one session/sitting. These short sessions may be scheduled over several days. The student may not return to a previous section once the section has been completed.

The direct-writing component of the English assessment must be conducted in one sitting. The session should be scheduled for a period long enough to accommodate the needs of the student.

#### **PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS**

All students should be familiar with the test format before attempting the test. A familiarity with test format is best provided as part of regular instruction well in advance of the actual test administration.

##### **Braille**

A copy of the Braille tests will be provided in regular print to Test Examiners or Proctors working with Braille readers.

##### **Large Print**

If the student marks responses on an enlarged copy of the answer document, the student's responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and the enlarged copy of the answer document must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in the transcription occurred. The enlarged copy of the answer document shall be retained on file and secured in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

##### **Interpreting /Transliterating Directions (e.g., sign language, cued speech)**

Testing sessions for students who are deaf or have hearing impairment and who normally communicate in sign language or using cued speech may include a qualified interpreter or transliterator for test directions or to interpret/transliterate questions answered by the Test

Examiner. (The interpreter's role and code of ethics prohibits answering questions directly). The Test Examiner must be present for the testing session, must read the test directions aloud as presented in the Examiner's Manual so that they can be interpreted/transliterated. Student questions must be directed to the Test Examiner and answered by him or her, and the interpreter/transliterator will communicate the response. The interpreter/transliterator should also communicate sample test questions that are read aloud as part of the test directions.

### **Interpreting /Transliterating (e.g., sign language, cued speech) Test Items**

The Test Examiner must be very careful when an interpreter/transliterator is used to interpret/transliterate test items so as not to lead the student to a correct answer by facial expression or by repeating any part of the test which is not specifically requested by the student. An interpreted/transliterated administration must be proctored **or** videotaped. The Test Examiner and the Proctor must verify in writing that the test administration was conducted according to standardized procedures. This written verification shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may be considered by school divisions for the read-aloud accommodation for state reading tests because of difficulty hearing phonemes, which is a part of the decoding process. Eligibility must be determined by a diagnostic tool or instrument administered by a certified authority. If a student who is deaf or hard of hearing is found eligible for the read-aloud accommodation, the test would be administered through an interpreter if that student uses sign language as their primary method of communicating. The interpreter should sign without providing the student with answers. The interpreter should be videotaped while interpreting the test or proctored by appropriate school personnel. If the student does not use an interpreter, but depends on speechreading in addition to audition for comprehension, the read-aloud accommodation should be done face-to-face and recorded on audiotape.

### **Read-aloud Accommodation on the Reading Assessment**

The read-aloud accommodation on the statewide reading assessments is allowed only for students with a visual impairment, including blindness, and those students with a specific disability that severely limits or prevents them from decoding text at any level of difficulty as determined by a diagnostic tool or instrument that was administered by a certified authority. Students with disabilities who are simply having difficulty reading text and/or are reading below grade-level are not allowed the read-aloud accommodation on the statewide reading assessments.

If the read-aloud accommodation for the reading test is used for students with disabilities who have not been determined as eligible by the school division according to the criteria stated above, the read-aloud will be considered a non-standard accommodation for the 2006-2007 school year only.

### **Read-aloud Accommodation on Assessments (Except the Reading Assessment)**

The read-aloud accommodation on mathematics, science, and history/social science, and writing assessments is allowed for students with disabilities as specified in the IEP or 504

Plan. Special attention must be given to the IEP or 504 Plan for specific accommodations regarding reading the test aloud. For example, a student's accommodation may require the entire test to be read orally or may require having words, questions, or sentences read orally only when requested by the student.

### **Reading of Test Items Aloud (For all Assessments)**

When reading the tests aloud the Test Examiner must be careful not to lead the student by intonation or to repeat any part of the test which is not specifically requested by the student. In particular, care must be taken to describe graphics without leading the student to the correct response. The audiocassette provides a taped version of the test directions and test items. The Test Examiner who reads the tests aloud should consult the tape for the standard approach to reading the material. A printed test (either regular or large-print) or a Braille copy of the test should be used in conjunction with reading the test aloud in order to provide the student multi-sensory stimulation. Test items must be read in English.

All read-aloud administrations must be recorded or proctored. The audiotaped record of the entire testing session must be retained on file and secure in the office of the Division Director of Testing until scores are received and verified. If proctored, the Test Examiner and Proctor must verify in writing that the test administration was conducted according to standardized procedures. This written verification must be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until scores are received and verified.

### **Audiotape Accommodation on Mathematics, History/Social Science, and Science**

The audiotape accommodation for mathematics, science, history/social science, and writing assessments is allowed for students with disabilities as specified in the IEP or 504 Plan. The student should have instructional experience with audiotapes, such as using audio versions of textbooks or taping lectures in class. Unless the student has experience with using audios, the audios may cause more difficulty than assistance. The audio must be used in conjunction with a printed test (either regular or large-print) or a Braille test and must be in English.

### **Audiotape Accommodation on the Reading Assessment**

The audio accommodation on the statewide reading assessments is allowed only for students with a visual impairment, including blindness, and those students with a specific disability that severely limits or prevents them from decoding text at any level of difficulty as determined by a diagnostic tool or instrument that was administered by a certified authority. Students with disabilities who are simply having difficulty reading text and/or are reading below grade-level are not allowed the audio accommodation on the statewide reading assessments.

If the audio accommodation for the reading test is used for students with disabilities who have not been determined as eligible by the school division according to the criteria stated above, the audio will be considered a non-standard accommodation for the 2006-2007 school year only.



## **RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is important to remember that even when accommodations are provided, all responses on the assessments should be the student's response, not one interpreted by others.

### **Student Marks Test Booklet and Examiner/Proctor Transfers Answers to Answer Document**

When this accommodation is provided, student responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and test booklet must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The test booklet must be retained on file and secure in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

### **Student Responds Verbally, Points, Uses Augmentative Device with Auditory Output, or Indicates an Answer and Examiner/Proctor Marks Answer Document**

Students who are unable to respond to test items by marking the regular answer document, an enlarged copy of the answer document or in a test booklet may have an Examiner/Proctor record the responses. An audiotape must be made of the exchange. Student responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and audio taped record must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The audio taped record shall be retained on file and secure in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

### **Brailier**

Blind and low-vision students may use a Braillewriter to respond to the writing prompt/direct-writing component of the English test or record responses to multiple-choice questions on the SOL tests. Student responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official qualified to read Braille. If a student has written his/her response to the writing assessment with a Braillewriter and has used Braille shorthand, the transcriber shall request the student to spell the English words. The regular answer document and Brailled material must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The Brailled material shall be retained on file and secure in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

### **Word Processor, Typewriter or Augmentative Communication Device**

This accommodation is available for students who are blind or have visual impairments and who do not read Braille, as well as students who have an orthopedic impairment, a specific learning disability or other disability that interferes with the composing process. It allows these students to use a typewriter, word processor, or augmentative communication device to complete the direct-writing assessment of the SOL English tests. Only augmentative communication devices which produce student responses verbatim may be used. If the augmentative communication device produces an auditory output, it should be treated as dictation to a scribe. It must be documented that the student uses a typewriter, word processor, or augmentative communication device for his/her written work.

The student's typed or printed response to the writing prompt must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and student response must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in the transcription occurred. The student's response shall be retained on file and secure in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified. Because the regular administration allows the use of a dictionary, a hand-held "spell checker" or the spell checking capacity of a computer can be used, but the student must not be prompted to use it. A document stating that the typed or printed response to the writing prompt is entirely the student's work and that no "grammar checker" was used must be signed by the Test Examiner and Proctor and retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

### **Word Prediction Software**

*Writing Assessment only*

Word prediction/selection software is allowed on the writing prompt component of the SOL Writing assessments. Word prediction/selection is defined as any software providing a student with a selection of single words from a student-generated single or multiple keystroke. For example, a student may type into the software the letter "p". The software will provide the student with a list of single words starting with the letter "p" (e.g., "plane", "plain", "put", "part", "please", etc.).

It should be noted that word prediction/selection is limited to the software providing selections of single words and not phrases, grammatically appropriate options, or other unrelated word choices generated by student keystrokes to predict sentence structure.

Software with word prediction/selection must not provide prompting for spell checking, grammar checking, predicting phrases or word choices, and must not make use of a thesaurus.

If the word prediction/selection software allows selection of a dictionary for use by the software, an appropriate dictionary for the student's grade level should be selected.

### **Dictation to a Scribe**

*Writing Assessment only*

The student will dictate (or use an augmentative communication device with auditory output) his/her response to the writing assessment in English to a second person (scribe) who will transcribe it. The session between the student and scribe must be recorded on audiotape and given to Division Director of Testing along with the transcription. The scribe, who should have experience working with the student, must format, capitalize and punctuate only as directed by the student. The student is not required to spell each word to the scribe. The scribe's transcription and taped record must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The scribe's transcription and taped record shall be retained on file and secure in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the established appeal period is over.